

The Prophet in His Cave. Daring Adven- ture of an Amer- ican Cowboy in the Matabele War.

Milmo, the terrible prophet of the Matabele, has been slain. He was the king power behind the war which has cost the lives of many whites in Rhodesia and threatens to spread into the native revolt in South Africa—an American version of the Indian mutiny.

Texas cowboy named Burnham killed Milmo, and by doing so has made him the hero of the day in South Africa. He has perhaps been the means of saving thousands of lives and vast quantities of property.

Milmo lived in a wonderful cave in the Matabele hills, the great stronghold of the Matabele, where the coronation of the king, described in the Sunday paper, recently, took place. It was filled with human heads and other objects paring variously of the horrible and the curious in their nature.

The entrance to this cave, which has been described by a traveller, is through a black hole in the side of the hill. It leads to a series of intricate chambers of rock, in which it would be easy for a man familiar with the place to lose himself.

When Burnham entered the most solemn of his chambers, the Milmo occupied the gloomy, most chamber. There, in front of a large fire, he squatted. Above his head, a large number of human skulls, relics of those who had fallen victims to his judgment, his hands he held a skull of man and shape. His body was tattooed with mystic signs, and he wore a dress of vultures' feathers. He crawled venomous snakes, and other hideous creeping things.

He stood a rudely made open as covered with human jaw-bones, taken from the Matabele. In place of a wall, he had a hideous wooden shielded arms of which were the Matabele.

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THE MILMO MAN AND HIS CAVE.



THE PROPHET
IN HIS
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CARRYING POWER OF BIKES

They Can Transport More, Considering Their Weight, Than Any Vehicle in Existence.

Is it the destiny of the bicycle to revolutionize the carrying agents of the world? This question is being asked more frequently each day by those interested in the land movement of freight and perishable cargoes, and the answer would seem to be in favor of the bicycle.

It has already been practically demonstrated that in proportion to its weight and strength the bicycle can carry more weight than any other vehicle invented by man.

Few persons realize the carrying power of the fragile, cobweb-like construction which is to-day so common upon the streets, and statistics indicate most conclusively that a new era in carrying and locomotive power has already dawned.

The wheel, because of its great carrying power, seems to have partly overcome gravitation, in that the weight seems lessened, with no apparent reason for its decrease. That a bicycle may have a fair trial in the weight placed on it, the tires should be inflated to their full capacity of about fifty pounds to the square inch, this being the maximum quantity of air that they will safely contain.

This will cause more weight to be absorbed than would be the case were they inflated to a lower pressure. The practicality of the pneumatic tire has been demonstrated by its use on cars, carriages and other conveyances, and wherever a tire of this description can be used the ball bearings can also be used to advantage.

An evidence of this is in its application to what is commonly known as the "bike sulky," a racing machine which is hitched behind a trotter and on which sits the driver. When it was first used everybody derided how a horse could make a record of seconds better than any previous without any intermediate break in the road. Then, weeks after, some of the men suddenly got an idea. "Why, he with pneumatic tires and ball bearings. Then the mystery was plain.

Already the cycle idea has been many uses for the transportation of things, and it is a common thing to see wagons being peddled up and down the streets. The crowning success, however, the bicycle has not yet been attained, though it is of inestimable value in opinions are worth anything. As with the ordinary wagon and with the ordinary railroad car, the bicycle is present just now a most interesting question to the constructors of vehicles of whatever character.

A python's bite, although not venomous, effects were plainly shown. The blood had been forced down into the finger tips and the veins on the hand were swollen. If the reptile had seized the arm in its teeth there would have been more trouble. The teeth of a big python are nearly an inch long and as sharp as needles. They are about as thick as good-sized darning needles and slanted back and so as to firmly hold their prey.

By the time the third rabbit was introduced the first snake had uncoiled and was searching for the head of the rabbit. Snakes always swallow their prey head first, and, singularly enough, always seem to be unable to find the head for some time. Once the snake has seized its palpitating prey by the head the swallowing proceeds rapidly. The big python can and often does eat half a dozen rabbits at a meal. Sometimes a small goat is given to it and is disposed of almost as quickly as a rabbit.

Pythons have been seen and even captured up to thirty and forty feet in length, but this big fellow in the Jardin des Plantes is actually the largest now living in captivity.

As soon as the keeper began to unfasten the door of their cage in order to feed them the three big reptiles aroused themselves from their death-like sleep. They rapidly uncoiled and darted their heads from side to side, reaching for their prey. The keeper cautiously opened the door and slipped in a large rabbit. Like a flash the big python, who was near the door, seized it and threw his coils around it, crushing the bones of its victim at once. The other two were excited by the smell of the flesh of the rabbit, and the keeper waited a little while before introducing another rabbit.

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FEEDING THE BIG PYTHONS.

Scenes at the Semi-Annual Meal of the Reptiles of Paris.

The Jardin des Plantes, in Paris, possesses the biggest snake in captivity, and its collection of boas and pythons is the finest in the world. The great reptiles are only fed twice a year, and as a special favor the Journal correspondent was allowed to witness their ghastly meal.

There were altogether twenty large boas and pythons in the reptile house, but in one large cage the three biggest pythons are confined. The largest one is twenty-six feet long and as thick as a man's

is not at all pleasant, and they are quick as lightning to strike. While the heads were near the door the keeper kept it shut, but they soon began wandering around the cage, searching for another rabbit. Watching its opportunity, the keeper slid the door open and let another rabbit loose in the cage.

Quick as he was he was not quick enough and one of the pythons seized the rabbit and threw its coils around the unfortunate bunny before the man could remove his hand. The hand and part of the arm were firmly held in the python's deadly coils, although the teeth of the snake were fixed in the rabbit. The keeper was equal to the occasion, although it caused a thrill to run through the onlookers. He gave the big reptile a smart blow with his left fist and rapidly twisting his right arm around withdrew it before the snake had time to tighten up again.

The keeper explained that if a snake is coiled around an arm or leg it can be generally removed in this way if the grip is not too tight. The snake shrinks back for an instant after the blow and the coils loosen. Immediately afterward, however, they tighten up harder than before, so that the limb has to be withdrawn with the utmost rapidity.

Even for the short time the arm had been in the terrible grip of the serpent the



THE
JAW-BONE
AND
SKULL
UMBRELLA

NECKLACE OF FINGER-BONES



To prevent this and to hold them in the trench until some method of extermination could be successfully applied, holes were dug in the trench about twenty feet apart and three feet deep.

Then began the march along the bottom of the trench in earnest, and soon the pest holes were two by two.

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The devastation of the army worm reaches from San Francisco to Maine. The worst of the pest seems to be ever out of the East. The farmers in Massachusetts are having to fight the pest night and day to save what they can of their crops. At Hingham, which is only a few miles from Boston, the depredations of the army worm, on the stock farm owned by Henry G. Jordan in the town, have been very extensive, and grain valued at many hundreds of dollars has been destroyed.

Mr. Jordan's farm is on Free street, directly opposite that owned by ex-Senator Aaron Low. The crops on Mr. Low's acres have not been, so far, seriously injured, the march of the pest, having been stopped in the nick of time and millions of the worms either burned to death or trampled under foot.

Secretary Sessions of the State Board of Agriculture inspected the infected district in Hingham recently and pronounced the pest one of the worst that has ever visited the East.

Through the lands of Mr. Jordan and his neighbor runs Weymouth River, a small stream which has its outlet in the harbor, several miles below. Nearly opposite Mr. Jordan's farm, on the banks of the river, is a miniature forest, an ideal breeding place for the army worm.

Farmers generally were astounded when the worms first made their appearance, and it was not until they had done considerable damage that Mr. Jordan succeeded in checking them.

One of the methods finally devised to destroy the pest was to dig a trench around the twenty-one-acre grain field, just in advance of the line of march. The worms once in the trench showed a tendency to travel on a level along the bottom, although it was possible for them to crawl up the side and out again to the level field.

To prevent this and to hold them in the trench until some method of extermination could be successfully applied, holes were dug in the trench about twenty feet apart and three feet deep.

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THE ARMY WORM AT WORK



VARIOUS WAYS OF DESTROYING THE ARMY WORM NEAR